

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 SSM-03 TRSE-00 OMB-01 IO-13 /074 W  
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AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY  
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 6560

TEHRAN FOR SECRETARY'S PARTY

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PDEV LE US  
SUBJ: LEBANESE AND PALESTINIAN REACTIONS TO LATEST U.S. STATE-  
MENTS

1. SUMMARY: LEBANESE ARE BEGINNING TO REACT TO STATEMENTS BY  
PRESIDENT CARTER DISAPPROVING OF PALESTINIAN STATE AND NATIONAL  
SECURITY ADVISOR BRZEZINSKI RULING OUT PLO AS PART OF PEACE PRO-  
CESS. PRESS IS REPORTING PROMINENTLY PRESIDENT'S DECEMBER 28  
TELEVISION INTERVIEW AND PRESIDENT SADAT'S CRITICISM. POLITICAL  
CIRCLES, LEFT AND RIGHT, ARE DEEPLY WORRIED ABOUT CONSEQUENCES FOR  
LEBANON IF THERE IS NO MIDDLE EAST SOLUTION ACCEPTABLE TO THE  
PALESTINIANS. MARONITES IN PARTICULAR SEE GRAVE REPERCUSSIONS  
SOON: BACHIR GEMAYEL IS REPORTED TO BE HOPING FOR ISRAELI HELP  
TO ESTABLISH A MARONITE REPUBLIC, WITH U.S. ACQUIESCENCE; OTHER  
MARONITES MAY BE BEGINNING, AT LONG LAST, TO SEEK RAPPROCHEMENT  
WITH THE MOSLEMS, IN ORDER TO OFFSET BACHIR. END SUMMARY.

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2. IKE. MODERATE PRO-PALESTINIAN ENGLISH-LANGUAGE IKE DECEMBER  
29 REPORTED WITHOUT COMMENT WIRE SERVICE REPORTS FROM PARIS THAT  
NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR BRZEZINSKI HAD TOLD PARIS MATCH THAT  
U.S. HAD DONE EVERYTHING  
IT COULD TO INDUCE THE PLO TO ADOPT A  
MORE MODERATE POLICY, TO NO AVIAL, AND QUOTED BRZEZINSKI: "BYE-  
BYE PLO". IKE DECEMBER 30 BANNER IS "SADAT DISAPPOINTED WITH

CARTER", WITH SUBHEADING QUOTING SADAT: "HE IS MAKING MY JOB VERY DIFFICULT". STORY IS AP DISPATCH FROM CAIRO. ALSO ON FRONT PAGE IS STORY COMPILED FROM VARIOUS WIRE SERVICES IN WASHINGTON HEADLINED: "CARTER: YES TO BEGIN, NO TO PALESTINE". STORY SAYS PRESIDENT IN HIS TELEVISION INTERVIEW DEC. 28 THOUGHT BEGIN SHOWED A GREAT DEAL OF FLEXIBILITY IN HIS PLAN MADE PUBLIC IN THE KNESSET DEC. 28, AND CARRIES EXTRACTS OF TEXT OF INTERVIEW. EDITORIAL IN IKE ARGUES THAT SADAT HAS FAILED, SHOULD ADMIT IT, AND SHOULD RESIGN IF FAILURE HAS DESTROYED HIS CREDIBILITY AS "HELMSMAN" OF ARAB WORLD.

3. L'ORIENT LE JOUR. INDEPENDENT FRENCH-LANGUAGE DAILY L'ORIENT DECEMBER 29 FRONT PAGES BRZEZINSKI "BYE-BYE PLO" BASED ON AFP FROM PARIS, BUT OTHERWISE SAYS LITTLE ABOUT U.S. ROLE. L'ORIENT DEC. 30, HOWEVER, HEADLINE STORY IS: "SADAT: DECEIVED BY CARTER". STORY, BASED ON UPI AND AFP REPORTS FROM CAIRO OF SADAT'S CBS TELEVISION INTERVIEW, FOCUSES ON SADAT'S ADJECTIVES. STORY ALSO QUOTES Wafa COMMENTARY OF DECEMBER 29 ATTACKING BRZEZINSKI STATEMENTS TO PARIS MATCH: U.S. HAS MADE "STRATEGIC DECISION TO OPPOSE THE CREATION OF AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE ON PALESTINIAN SOIL, AND TO BLOCK THE WAY FOR THE PLO, WHICH IS TO BE ISOLATED AND, IF NECESSARY, LIQUIDATED...(THE ISRAELI-AMERICAN POLICY ATTEMPTS) TO POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY SUBJECT THE ARAB WORLD AND MAKE ISRAEL THE GENDARME OF THE MIDDLE EAST". STORY SAYS A U.S.-PLO RUPTURE HAS BEEN PRACTICALLY ASSURED, ALTHOUGH THE PLO REMAINS THE SOLE LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PALESTINIANS IN THE VIEW OF THE CONFIDENTIAL

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ARAB STATES. STORY QUOTES A PLO OFFICIAL: "THE UNITED STATES HAS LOST ALL PRETENSION TO BEING AN HONEST ARBITER OF THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT." A Wafa COMMENTARY ALSO STATES THAT IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT U.S. STATEMENTS, "THE PLO AFFIRMS THAT THE BASIS OF ARAB CONFRONTATION ON THE OFFICIAL AND POPULAR LEVELS SHOULD TAKE THE FORM OF A THREAT TO U.S. INTERESTS IN THE REGION."

4. ARABIC PRESS. COMMENTARY IN ARAB LANGUAGE PRESS IS SO FAR LIMITED. INDEPENDENT AN NAHAR DECEMBER 30 SEEMS DETERMINED TO BE OPTIMISTIC, WITH STORY THAT ISRAEL "MIGHT INSIST ON THE PRESENCE OF ALL PARTIES CONCERNED IN ORDER TO AGREE ON MORE CONCESSIONS. . . ISRAEL ALSO MIGHT DEMAND RECOGNITION BY THE PLO OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL BEFORE MAKING ANY CONCESSIONS, OTHERWISE IT WILL CONTENT ITSELF WITH THE PRESENCE OF EGYPT AND JORDAN. . .IN ADDITION TO THE PRESENCE OF SYRIA AS SUBSTITUTE FOR THE PLO. THIS POINT MIGHT BE ONE OF THE SUBJECTS TO BE DISCUSSED DURING PRESIDENT CARTER'S TRIP." (COMMENT: AN NAHAR SENIOR EDITOR MICHEL ABU JAWDEH HAS BEEN ENTHUSIASTICALLY SUPPORTIVE OF THE SADAT INITIATIVES, AND BROADLY OPTIMISTIC THAT PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST IS IN SIGHT.)

5. POLITICAL CIRCLES. LEFTISTS CONTINUE TO SUPPORT HOSTILE PALESTINIAN-SYRIAN OUTLOOK. MODERATE MOSLEMS, SOME ORIGINALLY

PRIVATELY BUT NOT PUBLICLY SUPPORTIVE OF SADAT INITIATIVES, ARE REFLECTING GROWING CONCERN: ISLAMIC GROUP SPOKESMAN CHAFIC WAZZAN IS SAYING THAT, LIKE THE PALESTINIANS, MOSLEMS SUPPORT THE IDEA OF A PALESTINIAN HOMELAND IN PALESTINE, NOT IN LEBANON. (FOR HIS EFFORTS, SOMEBODY PUT A BOMB IN FRONT OF HIS HOUSE. SECURITY AUTHORITIES SUSPECT THE PALESTINIANS; ONE PALESTINIAN SOURCE SUSPECTS LEBANESE LEFTISTS; AND ONE MARONITE SOURCE WE KNOW SUSPECTS THE SYRIANS.)

6. AMONG THE MARONITES, U.S. STATEMENTS HAVE HAD SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: BACHIR GEMAYEL, WHO JUST RETURNED FROM THE U.S., IS REPORTEDLY TELLING PEOPLE THAT THERE WILL BE A BIG ISRAELI OPERATION TO DESTROY THE PALESTINIANS IN SOUTH AND THAT THE U.S. WILL GO ALONG WITH IT. OTHER MARONITES FEAR AND SUSPECT THAT HE MAY

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BE RIGHT, AND THAT HE WANTS TO TAKE OVER A RESULTING "PHALANGIST REPUBLIC". CAMILLE CHAMOUN REPORTEDLY BELIEVES THAT THE SYRIANS WILL SOON HAVE TO LEAVE LEBANON, AND IS SCRAMBLING TO FIND SOME MOSLEM AND DRUZE ALLIES TO OFFSET BACHIR. ANOTHER RUMOR IS THAT SULEIMAN FRANGIE IS SEEKING TO STRIKE A BARGAIN WITH RACHID KARAME, TO ENCOURAGE THE SYRIANS TO STAY. COMMON THEME AMONG THE MARONITES IS THAT, WHATEVER HAPPENS, THERE WILL BE MOMENTOUS REPERCUSSIONS IN LEBANON.

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